

Malaria. Edited by G T Strickland. (pp 279. £15.00). London: Saunders, 1986. (Clinics in tropical medicine and communicable diseases, 1: 1).

The greatest disappointment of post-war preventive health measures is that malaria is again reinfesting the areas from which it was so painstakingly driven by sustained public health effort following the Second World War, and again a majority of the world's population live under its shadow. This is explained in the excellent chapter on the epidemiology of malaria and proper attention is given to the changing ways in which the illness may be propagated, in particular the influence of its second vector, the modern jet plane.

As the clinical descriptions in this book so amply demonstrate, malaria has a very protean symptomatology but its early recognition is essential since if, unrecognised and thus untreated, *Falciparum* malaria can be rapidly fatal especially to those reared in non-endemic areas. The same changes responsible for the changing epidemiology and treatment of malaria have largely altered the clinical picture, outdating descriptions in the standard medical textbooks and invalidating much of what we were once taught as undergraduates. Thus, a book providing an up-to-date account of the clinical presentations, management and prophylaxis of malaria was much needed and a busy clinician will find it hard to better this monograph as an authoritative source of information on all aspects of malaria. The chapter on the current status of malaria prophylaxis and the distribution of drug resistance should be required reading for anyone offering advice to prospective travellers, while the extensive exploration of the immunopathology and pathophysiology of malaria is well worth reading to gain some idea of how far the modern understanding of an infectious disease process can be extended.

Sensibly hard-backed to stand up to the heavy use it will undoubtedly receive as a reference source on all aspects of malaria, the book should be included in any hospital or health centre library and represents such good value by modern publishing standards that its purchase can be strongly recommended to practising clinicians. As the first in a very welcome series of clinics in infectious disease topics, *Malaria* sets an exceptional standard of scholarship and clarity which the editors of the succeeding volumes will do well to match.

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Knowledge representation in medicine and clinical behavioural science. Edited by L Kohout and W Bandler. (pp 211. £24.50). Cambridge, Mass: Abacus Press, 1986.

This is really a book for the enthusiast, although it will have some interest to most doctors. The authors examine many aspects of knowledge representation especially when it is relevant to information processing machines and to medical expert systems.

There is no doubt that computers have made a significant impact on the periphery of clinical practice. This book sets out to examine the background and problems related to future development of computers much more directly involved with clinical decisions. For this reason, the concepts are exciting as the scope involved is that much greater. The book itself is by a number of authors presenting different aspects of the analysis of problems and possible solutions. Parts of it are very technical and would, I suspect, only really interest people with a primary computer background. However, there are several challenging chapters concerning such things as the methodology of clinical decision making which should prove interesting to doctors with no computer knowledge. The authors also illustrate the considerable difficulty of reconciling the practical constraints of computing to the rather inexact science of the practice of medicine.

While the book as a whole is difficult to read, even a rather superficial examination is worthwhile in illustrating the state of the art and future lines of thought in true medical computing.

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MEMOIRS OF DR R S ALLISON — Continued from page 163.

of narrow twisting lanes with high hedgerows between sleepy villages. Most of the gables then were painted pink — a survival I was told of Danish influences in the past. I only remember one patient there. She was a woman to whom I was called on a Sunday morning to find in labour, but she denied that there had been any interruption of her menstrual cycle, which had apparently continued uninterrupted during the pregnancy.